

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03780 01 OF 02 031853Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----066708 031908Z /41

O 031801Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4785

S E C R E T BEIRUT SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 3780

EXDIS

DAMASCUS FOR THE SECRETARY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS) LE
SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S VISIT - CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS

1. SECRETARY MET WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS FOR BETTER PART OF AN HOUR AUGUST 3. AMBASSADOR PARKER ONLY OTHER PERSON PRESENT UNTIL LAST FIVE OR TEN MINUTES WHEN PRIME MINISTER HOSS, FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS, HABIB AND ATHERTON JOINED THEM. FOLLOWING UNCLEARED MEMCON BASED ON AMBASSADOR'S NOTES. CONVERSATION DEALT PRIMARILY WITH QUESTION MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT AND SECONDLY WITH SITUATION IN SOUTH LEBANON.

2. PRESIDENT BEGAN BY WELCOMING SECRETARY AND SAYING HE DID NOT KNOW HOW LATTER WISHED TO PROCEED BUT HE PERSONALLY WOULD APPRECIATE BEING BROUGHT UP TO DATE ON PROGRESS TOWARD GENEVA AND SETTLEMENT.

3. SECRETARY REPLIED THAT THERE WERE THREE KEY ISSUES HE WAS TRYING TO DEAL WITH ON HIS CURRENT TOUR. PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION, NATURE OF PEACE, AND NATURE OF PALESTINIAN ENTITY. THE VIEWS OF ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL ON TERRITORIAL ISSUES WERE PRETTY CLEAR AND HE WAS ADDRESSING
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 03780 01 OF 02 031853Z

HIMSELF PRIMARILY TO THREE ISSUES MENTIONED EARLIER.

4. PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION. HE HAD INDICATED TO SADAT THAT THERE SEEMED TO BE TOW POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR DEALING WITH THE WUESTION. ONE WAS TO INCLUDE PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATIVES IN THE JORDANIAN DELEGATION. THE OTHER WAS TO HAVE THE PALESTINIANS AS MEMBERS OF A PAN-ARAB DELE-

GATION. HE HAD SUGGESTED WHAT WITHIN A PAN-ARAB DELEGATION IT WOULD MAKE SENSE TO CONSIDER INCLUDING THE LEBANESE IT THE LEBANESE WERE INTERESTED. SADAT'S REACTION HAD BEEN THAT A PAN-ARAB DELEGATION WAS NOT DESIRABLE FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW. IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT AND WOULD INHIBIT FLEXIBILITY. SADAT HIMSELF WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION IN A JORDANIAN DELEGATION, BUT HE DOUBTED THE PLO WOULD GO ALONG. SADAT SUGGESTED A THIRD ALTERNATIVE -- A DELEGATION HEADED BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ARAB LEAGUE TO REPRESENT THE PALESTINIANS. SADAT THOUGHT THE OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES MIGHT ACCEPT THIS IDEA.

5. ISRAEL'S POSITION WAS ONE OF OPPOSITION TO A PAN-ARAB DELEGATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA OF A JORDANIAN DELEGATION WHICH INCLUDED PALESTINIANS PROVIDED THEY WERE NOT KNOWN PLO MEMBERS.

6. THE SECRETARY FELT THERE WAS AT LEAST SOME NARROWING OF THE GAP. HE HAD NOT DISCUSSED THE SADAT PROPOSAL WITH THE OTHER CONFRONTATION STATES, HOWEVER, AND DID NOT KNOW WHETHER IT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THEM. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO AGREE TO DEFER THE ISSUE OF PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION UNTIL THE POINT IN NEGOTIATIONS WAS REACHED WHERE THE PALESTINIAN PROBLEM, I.E., THE NATURE OF THE PALESTINIAN ENTITY, WAS BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 03780 01 OF 02 031853Z

7. THE SECRETARY NOTED THAT PRIME MINISTER HOSS HAD SUGGESTED A FIFTH ALTERNATIVE - A SEPARATE PALESTINIAN DELEGATION WHICH WAS NOT COMPOSED OF THE PLO. FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS HAD RIGHTLY POINTED OUT THIS WOULD RAISE PROBLEMS WITH THE PLO GIVEN THE DECISION OF THE RABAT SUMMIT THAT IT WAS SOLE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. SECRETARY'S OWN VIEW WAS THAT EITHER THE PAN-ARAB OR JORDANIAN DELEGATION PROPOSALS WOULD BE THE MOST PRACTICAL.

8. PRESIDENT SARKIS ASKED IF HE UNDERSTOOD CORRECTLY THAT SADAT HAS AGREED TO LET EGYPT BE REPRESENTED BY THE ARAB LEAGUE. THE SECRETARY SAID NO. THE ARAB LEAGUE WAS TO REPRESENT ONLY THE PALESTINIANS. THE PRESIDENT ASKED IF SADAT THOUGHT THE PLO WOULD ACCEPT SUCH A PROPOSAL. THE SECRETARY SAID THAT SADAT APPARENTLY THOUGHT IT MIGHT. HE HIMSELF HAD NO IDEA WHETHER IT WAS A REALISTIC POSSIBILITY. HOW DID THE PRESIDENT FEEL?

9. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE COULD ONLY SPEAK FROM THE LEBANESE POINT OF VIEW. HOWEVER, HE HAD MET WITH PALESTINIAN LEADERS. (ARAFAT AND SALAH KHALEF) IN THE PAST FEW DAYS AND THEY INSISTED ON BEING PRESENT AT A GENEVA

CONFERENCE. SADAT MIGHT BE BETTER PLACED THAN HE TO KNOW
WHAT THE PALESTINIANS WOULD ACCEPT, BUT HE COULD ONLY
REPORT WHAT HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY THE PLO.

10. THE SECRETARY NOTED THAT IN EARLIER DISCUSSION OF
ARAB LEAGUE DELEGATION PROPOSAL HE HAD
NOT SPECIFIED IT AS COMING FROM SADAT. HE HAD JUST SAID
IT WAS PUT FORWARD BY ONE OF THE PARTIES. THE PRESIDENT
NODDED TO INDICATE HE UNDERSTOOD. HE ASKED IT WE THOUGHT
ISRAEL WOULD OPPOSE PLO REPRESENTATION IN A PAN-ARAB
DELEGATION.

11. THE SECRETARY REPLIED THAT ISRAEL WAS AGAINST A PAN-
ARAB DELEGATION AND ALSO OPPOSED TO PLO PARTICIPATION.
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 BEIRUT 03780 01 OF 02 031853Z

ISRAEL MIGHT CHANGE ITS POSITION BECAUSE A PAN-ARAB DELEGA-
TION MIGHT BE THE ONLY WAY TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM. HE DID NOT
RULE IT OUT. HE KNEW THAT THE SYRIANS FAVORED SUCH AN
APPROACH.

12. PRESIDENT NOTED SYRIANS WERE FOR IT BUT SADAT WAS AGAINST.
THE SECRETARY ASKED FOR HIS VIEWS REGARDING THE JORDANIAN
DELEGATION PROPOSAL.

13. THE PRESIDENT REPLIED THAT THE PROBLEM WAS TO SOME
EXTENT PSYCHOLOGICAL. IF PALESTINIANS
HAD IN ADVANCE SOME ASSURANCES, BY WHICH HE MEANT ASSURANCES
BY US, AS TO WHAT THEY WOULD GET AS THEIR SHARE AS
RESULT OF NEGOTIATIONS HE THOUGHT PROCEDURAL QUESTION
EASIER TO SOLVE. PROBLEM WAS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF CONFIDENCE.
THE PALESTINIANS WERE INTERESTED NOT SO MUCH IN PROCEDURES
AS IN RESULTS.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03780 02 OF 02 040853Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

-----078727 040855Z /12

O 031801Z AUG 77

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4786

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BEIRUT 3780

NODIS

DAMASCUS FOR THE SECRETARY

14. THE PRESIDENT NOTED THAT THE PALESTINIANS WERE ASKING WHY SO MANY CONCESSIONS WERE BEING ASKED OF THEM. MORE WAS BEING ASKED OF THEM THAT WAS BEING ASKED OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS. THE PALESTINIANS WERE BEING ASKED TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL AS PRICE FOR GOING TO GENEVA. THIS HAD NOT BEEN ASKED OF ARAB GOVERNMENTS WHO WERE SIMPLY AGREEING TO SUSPEND HOSTILITIES. THE PLO ARGUES ITS WILLINGNESS TO ENTER NEGOTIATIONS CONSTITUTED RECOGNITION OF ISRAEL. THEY FELT THEY SHOULD NOT BE ASKED TO DO MORE THAN ARAB GOVERNMENTS WERE.

15. THE SECRETARY SAID ARAB GOVERNMENTS HAD ACCEPTED RESOLUTION 242, WHICH MEANT ACCEPTANCE OF EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO LIVE IN PEACE. PRESIDENT ASKED WHAT IF THE PLO SAID IT WOULD ACCEPT WHATEVER THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS ACCEPTED WITHOUT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONING RESOLUTION 242?

16. THE SECRETARY SAID WE FELT THIS WAS NOT A MATTER IN WHICH WE COULD PLAY WITH WORDS. COMMITMENTS MUST BE CLEAR AND EXPLICIT. WE HAD SAID DURING THE SINAI II NEGOTIATIONS WE COULD NOT RECOGNIZE THE PLO UNLESS IT ACCEPTED RESOLUTION 242. WE WOULD LIKE TO TALK TO THE PLO BUT WE HAD GIVEN OUR WORD IN THIS RESPECT AND WE WERE NOT SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 BEIRUT 03780 02 OF 02 040853Z

GOING TO GO BACK ON IT. PRESIDENT CARTER HAD SAID IT THE PLO ACCEPTED RES. 242, WE COULD TALK TO THEM. EVEN IT THEY DID SO WITH RESERVATIONS TO EFFECT IT DID NOT DEAL FULLY WITH PROBLEM, THIS WOULD OPEN THE WAY FOR US TO TALK TO THEM. THE SECRETARY THEN SHOWED PRESIDENT SARKIS A PARAGRAPH OF LANGUAGE TO THIS EFFECT WHICH HAD BEEN PASSED TO THE PLO.

17. PRESIDENT SARKIS SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR THE PALESTINIANS TO ACCEPT RES. 242 EXPLICITLY. WHAT IF THEY JUST SAID THEY WOULD ACCEPT WHATEVER THE ARAB GOVERNMENTS ACCEPTED? THIS WOULD IMPLICITLY INCLUDE RES. 242.

18. THE SECRETARY SAID THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE CLEAR AND PRECISE REGARDING ACCEPTANCE OF RES. 242. THIS WOULD PERMIT US TO ACCOMPLISH STEP 1 OF ESTABLISHING COMMUNICATION WITH THEM AND WE WOULD THEN HAVE TO FACE QUESTION OF HOW PALESTINIANS

COULD BE REPRESENTED AT GENEVA.

19. THE SECRETARY GAVE PRESIDENT SARKIS A PIECE OF PAPER OUTLINING PRINCIPLES WHICH WE THOUGHT SHOULD GOVERN A SETTLEMENT. HE NOTED THAT THEY WERE PUT DOWN IN A VERY SIMPLE FORM BUT THEY INCLUDED THE ITEMS WE THOUGHT MUST BE COVERED. HE ALSO PLANNED TO DISCUSS ALL THESE ITEMS WITH THE CONFRONTATION STATES.

20. SECREATRY SAID THAT WITH REGARD TO WORKING GROUP PROGOSAL THERE WAS AN ITEM HE WANTED TO RAISE. IT WAS THAT THE PARTIES, INCLUDING LEBANON, SEND SUGGESTED TEXTS OF THEIR OWN PEACE TREATIES WITH THE ISRAELIS. THIS WOULD PERMIT US TO SEE THE DIFFERENCES AND PERHAPS CLARIFY CERTAIN ISSUES. THIS WOULD BE DONE WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE WORKING GROUP, WHICH WOULD NOT BE FORMALLY STRUCTURED. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE HAD NO OBJECTION BUT NOTED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD EARLIER SAID WE COULD NOT IMPOSE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 BEIRUT 03780 02 OF 02 040853Z

A SETTLEMENT. THE APPROACH THE SECRETARY WAS PROPOSING WAS SIMILAR TO THE APPROACH HE HAD TO USE IN LEBANON, THAT IS, TO EXPLORE DIFFICULTIES WITH PARTIES BEFORE FINALLY PRESENTING THEM WITH PROPOSITIONS. HE ASSUMED FROM WHAT SECRETARY SAID WHAT WE WERE CONSIDERING TAKING THESE PROPOSALS, TRYING TO RECONCILE THEM, AND COME UP WITH SOME COMMON DENOMINATOR. THIS HE FELT WAS THE ONLY WAY TO PROCEED. THE SECRETARY INDICATED WE HAD SOMETHING LIKE THIS IN MIND.

21. THE SECRETARY ADDED THAT HE WISHED TO EMPHASIZE HE FELT THE ONLY WAY HE COULD BE EFFECTIVE IN HIS PRESENT ROLE WAS TO KEEP OUT OF THE PUBIC PRINT WHAT WE WERE PROPOSING. SARKIS NODDED AGREEMENT AND SAID IT WAS JUST THE SAME WITH THE LEBANESE SITUATION.

22. THE SECRETARY SUBSEQUENTLY DISCUSSED INDIVIDUAL TEXTS IDEA WITH BOUTROS IN CAR ON WAY TO AIRPORT. BOUTROS WAS SOMEWHAT DUBIOUS, NOTING THAT ARAB STATES WOULD BE LIKELY TO OUTBID EACH OTHER IN ESTABLISHING RADICAL CREDENTIALS. HE AGREED TO GIVE IDEA MORE THOUGHT HOWEVER AND ASKED WHEN WE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE TEXT. SECRETARY SAID BY END OF AUGUST IF POSSIBLE. PARKER

NOTE: RECATEGORIZED TO NODIS VICE EXDIS PER STATE 183031

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PALESTINIANS, CAT-B, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BEIRUT03780
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: 1
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197708103/aaaadjrj.tel
Line Count: 271
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: e799144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1410476
Secure: LOCK1
Status: <DBA CHANGED> MCM 20040621
Subject: SECRETARY'S VISIT-CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT SARKIS
TAGS: OVIP, PDEV, US, LE, XF, PLO, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (SARKIS ILYAS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/e799144f-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009